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95, Motijheel C.A., Dhaka  
Tel # 9565114, Fax : 9565112

**BANGSHAL**

Majed Court, 16/1 Siddique Bazar  
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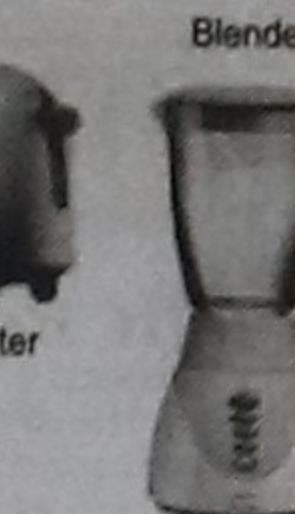
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**Hasina to attend funeral of Assad**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will leave Dhaka this evening for Damascus to attend the funeral of Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, reports UNB.

The funeral will be held tomorrow in his village home at Qardaha, 200 kms northwest of Damascus.

The Prime Minister will be accompanied by State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury, Principal Secretary of PM Dr S A Samad, Foreign Secretary CM Shafiq Sami and Press Secretary Jawadul Karim.

She is expected to return home on Wednesday.

**Khaleda's new office at Banani**

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia has taken a new office at Banani as alternative to the 29 Minto Road official residence, reports UNB.

Party sources said she will vacate the official residence with a caretaker government taking over power for holding general election due middle of next year.

**Gas leakage****Negligence of JFF authorities blamed**

By Staff Correspondent

Negligence of the factory authorities caused gas leakage at Jamuna Fertilizer Factory in Jamalpur on Friday, sources said.

At least 25 people were injured at a nearby market place when ammonia gas leaked from a plant at JFF during an overhauling attempt on Friday afternoon.

The victims suffered from irritation in eyes and nausea.

Talking to the Daily Star yesterday, State Minister for Religious Affairs Moulana Nurul Islam said he had talks with the factory authorities on the day of the incident and the officials admitted some negligence on their part.

The state minister, who was addressing a public rally near the factory on Friday afternoon, quoted the factory managing director as saying, "we would determine the faults after proper investigation."

The industries minister will visit the factory on June 13 and inquire about the accident," said Islam.

However, officials at Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation, which runs the state-owned factory, remained tight-lipped about the gas leakage incident.

Meanwhile, our Jamalpur correspondent reported that two of the victims of gas leakage incident were still receiving treatment at the district hospital. They are Maznur Rahman and Moshed Alam, both aged 32 years.

Later on, many villagers staged demonstrations demanding compensation to damage of crops and trees by the leaked gas.

However, sources said there were barely any adverse effect on cropland except some bamboo and banana trees and few jute fields.

**Top ten in DB Humanities Group**

Top ten merit positions in Humanities Group under Dhaka Board:

Nafisa Tanjeem (Roll 201295) of Vigarunnisa Noon School, marks 896; Romin Tamanna (Roll 201198) of Motijheel Govt Girls' High School and Asifa Sultan of Rifles Public School and College (Roll 205739), marks 863; Md Younis Khan (Roll 228706) of Adamjee High School, marks 853; Sharin Shahjahan (Roll 201192) of Motijheel Govt Girls' High School, marks 849; Tasneema Afrin (Roll 205365) of Agrani Girls School, MD Monwar Hossein (Roll 206588) of St Joseph High School and Mamun Sheikh (Roll 274261) of Dospoli N K High School, marks 848; Nusrat Naznin (Roll 208710) of Mirpur Bangla High School, marks 846; Sonia Ahmed (Roll 201265) of Vigarunnisa Noon School, marks 845; Syeda Nadia Hasan (Roll 205733) of Rifles Public School and College, marks 844; Sabrina Ahmed (Roll 205732) of Rifles Public School and College and Md Roish Uddin (Roll 251923) of Madhupur Shahid Smriti High School, marks 842; Nurunnahar (Roll 201119) of Motijheel Govt High School and Subarna Sarkar (Roll 241231) of Manikganj S K Govt Girls High School, marks 840.



Main Opposition BNP brought out a torch procession in the city yesterday in support of today's dawn-to-dusk hartal.

— Star photo

**Budget discussion begins All praise for govt while Opposition stays out of JS**

By Staff Correspondent

Latif Siddiqui and Haji Mohammad Selim.

Manu said the budgetary provision will help rejuvenate the country's agriculture sector and benefit the vast population linked with agriculture.

He said the government has already spent more than Tk 4000 crore as subsidy for farm inputs, resulting in bumper crop productions that contributed greatly to the GDP growth.

The treasury bench whip also appreciated the increased allocation for education sector. "... the literacy rate has increased to over 60 per cent. The investment in education sector will help the nation transform its huge population into productive human resources."

Abdul Latif Siddiqui said the dynamic and pragmatic fiscal policy of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government has revitalised the economy that suffered mismanagement of consecutive autocratic regimes.

Blasting the boycotting opposition parties, the AL MP said these parties, born to the merit of the opposition, do not believe in democratic norms. "Instead, they are conspiring to nip our democracy in the bud."

Haji Selim dubbed the proposed budget "progressive" and said it imposes almost no new tax. He claimed the country is now seeing a surge in development activities.

He was quick to refer to the development schemes in his constituency covering Lalbagh, Kamrangirchar and Hajaribagh. He said the "area has got a different look with new roads, educational institutions and other civic amenities."

Nipun thinks the whole education system is at stake due to widespread cheating at examinations. She said more technical questions should be there to test a student's creativity.

She wants to be a teacher after studying sociology at Dhaka University. She reads books and listens to music during spare time.

The High Court issued rule nisi upon the government to show cause why minor boy Jewel under treatment in DMCH in continued handcuffs shall not be brought to the court to satisfy itself that he is not being held in an unlawful manner, reports UNB.

The rule came on a writ petition filed by Ain O Salish Kendro (ASK), a human rights and legal aid organisation, challenging the continuous restraint of Jewel, 10, as reported by a newspaper (Prothom Alo) on June 6.

The division bench comprising Justice K M Hasan and Justice K I Chowdhury issued rule nisi on Home Ministry, IG of Prison, SP of Dhaka Central Jail, Superintendent of DMCH and others.

The court asked the respondents to show cause why continued use of handcuffs upon Jewel should not be declared to be without lawful authority and the provisions of the Prisons Act and the Jail Code relating to application of handcuffs should not be held to be unconstitutional.

The refugees, who were headed for Italy, had set sail from the port city of Antalya, 600 kilometers south of the capital, Ankara.

The refugees included 95 Turks, as well as Indians, Bangladeshis, Iraqis and Moroccans.

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